

seen great leaders, after a lifetime of service to this country, be unable to represent the citizens of this country?

Today we have many significant political leaders who cannot be president simply because they were not born here. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is the most famous example, but what about Michigan's Governor, Jennifer Granholm, who came to the United States from Canada at the age of four? Or Congressman Pete Hoekstra, who came to this country when he was a mere three years old and has been given the responsibility of being Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence? Congressman Hoekstra oversees the intelligence community in a post-9/11 United States and yet regardless of his lifetime of service, he cannot be President.

I hope my colleagues will agree with me that it is long past time for the "natural born" requirement to change. Respect for the many legal immigrants who have made our country great should lead us to conclude that once they have been U.S. citizens for 20 years they should no longer be constitutionally disqualified from serving in our nation's highest offices.

H.J. RES. 104

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission for ratification:

"ARTICLE—

"A person who is a citizen of the United States, who has been a citizen of the United States for at least 20 years, and who is otherwise eligible to hold the Office of the President, is not ineligible to hold that Office by reason of not being a native born citizen of the United States."

RECOGNIZING PAST AND PRESENT MEMBERS OF FERNALD FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the current and former members of the Fernald Fire Department for their distinguished service in protecting the former nuclear site and the surrounding community for the past 50 years.

Fernald was a major hub in America's nuclear weapons complex during the Cold War. Located about 25 miles north of Cincinnati, in Crosby Township, the site's primary charge was to produce metal uranium—an important and potentially dangerous job demanding skill and courage. The firefighters serving at Fernald share these same admirable qualities.

For the last half-century, the department's men and women—professionals and volunteers—have provided outstanding emergency response service to the Fernald site and the residents of Crosby Township. The department responds to hundreds of medical emergencies and house-fires every year—they made about 300 runs last year alone.

Mr. Speaker, firefighters, like the men and women of the Fernald Fire Department, have always played an important role in keeping Americans safe. That role has never been more vital or deserving of our admiration and respect than in the post-September 11 world. Whether in New York City or a rural community in southwestern Ohio the sacrifice and bravery of America's firefighters is on display every day—running toward the smoke and flames. Saving lives.

Later this year, the Fernald Fire Department will close its doors one last time after a job well done. They will leave behind their equipment and their service to a grateful community.

I want to thank the past and present members of the Fernald Fire Department for their dedication and sacrifice in making Fernald and Crosby Township safer places to live and work.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF AGUDAS ACHIM CONGREGATION

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take this opportunity to congratulate a congregation in my district celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. Agudas Achim Congregation in Alexandria, Virginia has been a fixture in Northern Virginia as a place of worship and a vibrant community. In conjunction with their 90th anniversary, the men and women of Agudas Achim are taking the opportunity to honor the military veterans who are part of their congregation and its extended family.

Since the Revolutionary War, Jewish servicemen and women have served our nation proudly. Whether they served as members of the infantry, pilots, doctors, nurses or chaplains, Jewish soldiers have proudly defended democracy throughout the world while protecting the freedoms of all Americans. Today they continue to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan to bring stability and hope to the people and region. Throughout the years, Jewish Americans have fought with great honor and distinction.

Responding to the call for service, Jewish Americans have served in the military in greater percentages than their percent of the population. They have shown great dedication and love for their nation and the rights that are within it. They recognize that freedoms, such as the freedom of religion, are not universal values granted to every person. Many of our ancestors, especially those of Jewish Americans, came to this country to escape religious tyranny. Today, this same drive that brought us together, helps us fight to gain these same freedoms for people throughout the world.

We remember those who fearlessly paid the ultimate price in defending the United States during times of war, and recall the sacrifice made by those who bravely fought and returned home. We also keep in our thoughts those who continue to serve our nation proudly in Iraq and Afghanistan. Together these men and women have helped preserve the freedoms that we cherish. While many have not made it home, I am certain there is com-

fort in knowing they perished fighting for their beliefs and for the protection of their families and friends back home.

I would like to thank all those Jewish men and women and their families who have served our nation. Their courage has helped preserve basic human rights for people throughout the world. I also thank Agudas Achim Congregation for paying tribute to these veterans, and bringing attention to their selflessness in defense of freedom. Agudas Achim has been at the forefront of defending these freedoms and, in doing so, has made Northern Virginia a better place to live.

TED VELEZ: REMEMBERING A HERO OF EL BARRIO

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 15, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay homage to the late Ted Velez of East Harlem, one of New York's finest sons who passed away August 6th 2004. He was a community leader whose tremendous achievements will continue to better the lives of the residents of East Harlem long into the future. Mr. Velez had a vision of New York City that saw equality across the board and included fair and affordable housing for all New Yorkers, regardless of color or social standing.

Working in El Barrio as a young social worker, Mr. Velez helped found the East Harlem Tenants Council in 1962, which boasted a network of progressive building captains who monitored building safety and overall residential well being. Two years later he championed a series of rent strikes on East 123rd Street, effectively forcing landlords to make necessary repairs in East Harlem residential buildings.

In the summer of 1971, after trudging for more than six years through city, state and federal bureaucracy; Mr. Velez won federal approval to transform the entire city block between 122nd and 123rd Streets. The project was funded with \$42 million dollars allotted from the Department of Housing and Urban Development Department, the largest allocation up to that time for a single community project. Mr. Velez's efforts resulted in comfortable, affordable housing for 656 low to moderate-income families in what is now known as the Taino Towers, giving East Harlem residents opportunities that many had believed to be impossible.

Throughout his accomplished life Mr. Velez strived at the forefront of progressive social change as a political activist, yet was able to work productively within the political mainstream with leaders of both political parties. He marched in civil rights demonstrations with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the South, where he helped to organize voter registration drives. In his twenties, he supported Senator Bobby Kennedy and also worked closely with Mayor John V. Lindsay's administration. He was a close associate of former Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton and Basil Paterson, two of New York's most influential Democratic leaders.

Born in Puerto Rico on December 29th 1938, Mr. Velez moved to East Harlem at the age of six. Working on behalf of the most needy, he managed to achieve the status of a